

Ganglion Pathway
(see GMEUR policy)

Clinical Presentation

- Ganglion cysts look and feel like a smooth, soft lump under the skin
- Wrist ganglia can be found either dorsal or palmar surface commonly on radial aspect
- Can occur in almost every joint and flexor sheath and mucous cysts
- Can be found on dorsum of foot
- May be painful but functional impairment varies



Examination

- Firm smooth soft tissue swelling present
- Firmness varies with joint position
- May be evidence of underlying joint disease most commonly OA



Investigations

- Only consider USS or MRI if there are concerns about the diagnosis.
- USS / MRI for recurrent volar ganglions



Treatment Options

- **Mild** Reassurance and observation
- Asymptomatic lump

Moderate

- Reassurance and observation
- Symptomatic and long-standing- aspiration except when close to radial artery

Severe

- Shared Decision Making
- Referral for surgical removal if:
 - Severe pain, restricts ADLs, concerns over diagnosis



Referral for surgical opinion indicated if either:

1. Ganglion of flexor tendon sheath and affects grip
2. Volar/dorsal ganglion of hand which is painful AND/OR affects sensation where conservative measures including aspiration failed
3. Multilobular ganglia of foot preventing wearing of footwear AND aspiration or conservative measures failed or not possible
4. Mucoid cysts with spontaneous discharge of fluid or nail deformity